

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

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R 190036Z FEB 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

S E C R E T STATE 039610

STADIS//////////

NOFORN, FOR CHIEFS OF MISSION

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MPOL

SUBJECT:MU 76

1. YOU SHOULD HAVE RECENTLY RECEIVED AN INVITATION FROM THE CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF TO ATTEND A SENIOR LEVEL POLITICO-MILITARY SIMULATION TO BE HELD AT THE ARMED FORCES RECREATION CENTER, GARMISCH, FRG, DURING THE PERIOD MARCH 29 TO APRIL 2, 1976. DEFENSE AND OTHER DEPARTMENTAL OFFICIALS FROM THE WASHINGTON AREA WILL ALSO PARTICIPATE.

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2. THE SIMULATION, DESIGNATED MU-76, WILL FOCUS ON US NATIONAL POLICIES AND ISSUES INVOLVING THE MEDITERRANEAN AREA PROJECTED TO A 1977-78 TIME FRAME. UNITED STATES STRATEGIC INTERESTS VIS-A-VIS NATO, THE SOUTHERN FLANK NATIONS AND THE COUNTRIES OF THE MIDDLE EAST WILL BE ADDRESSED, AND WILL AFFORD KEY UNITED STATES OFFICIALS AN OPPORTUNITY TO EXCHANGE IDEAS; EXAMINE CONTROVERSIAL PROGRAMS, OBJECTIVES, AND POLICIES; AND SURFACE NEW APPROACHES TO POSSIBLE FUTURE PROBLEMS.

3. JOINT CHIEFS' WAR GAMES HAVE ALWAYS ADDRESSED SENSITIVE ISSUES. IF THEY DID NOT, THEY WOULD NOT WARRANT THE HIGH-LEVEL PARTICIPATION WHICH THEY HAVE ATTRACTED IN THE PAST.

SAGA (THE STUDIES, ANALYSIS, AND GAMING AGENCY) HAS CONDUCTED SUCH GAMES WITH VERY SENIOR STATE/DEFENSE/CIA PARTICIPATION SINCE 1961 WITH NO LEAKS. THE FACT THAT THIS YEAR'S EXERCISE IS EVEN FOCUSED ON EUROPE AND THE MEDITERRANEAN IS IN ITSELF CLASSIFIED AS SECRET. THE JOINT CHIEFS STRONGLY PREFER TO KEEP PARTICIPATION IN THEIR GAMES AT THE AMBASSADORIAL LEVEL; ON THE MILITARY SIDE THE PARTICIPANTS WILL BE OF LIEUTENANT GENERAL RANK OR ABOVE.

4. WHILE PREVIOUS EXERCISES OF THIS TYPE HAVE BEEN VERY PRODUCTIVE AND THE DEPARTMENT IN THE PAST HAS ENCOURAGED HIGH-LEVEL PARTICIPATION, WE ARE CONCERNED OVER THE IMPLICATIONS OF HAVING SEVERAL MIDDLE EAST AMBASSADORS PARTICIPATE IN MU 76. ALTHOUGH THE EXERCISE DOES FOCUS ON THE MEDITERRANEAN AND NOT SPECIFICALLY ON THE MIDDLE EAST, THE PRESENCE OF SEVERAL US AMBASSADORS FROM THE NEAR EAST IN ONE SPOT COULD SPARK SPECULATION ON THE PURPOSE OF THE CONFERENCE.

5. THE DEPARTMENT HAS QUESTION OF NEA AMBASSADORIAL PARTICIPATION UNDER REVIEW. MEANWHILE WE WOULD APPRECIATE YOUR INDIVIDUAL JUDGMENTS OF THE PROPRIETY OF HAVING AMBASSADORS FROM ISRAEL, THE ARAB "CONFRONTATION" STATES, AND SAUDI ARABIA PARTICIPATE IN LIGHT OF THE ABOVE. INGERSOLL

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